

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 8-20 are pending in this application. Claim 1 was amended to correct an antecedent basis issue. Claims 2, 4-7 and 21-29 were cancelled. No new claims are presented in this response. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

For at least the reasons set forth below, withdrawal of all outstanding rejections and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

Entry of Rule 116 Response

Entry of this response is requested because this response does not raise any new issues that would require further consideration and/or search. No new claims are being presented in this response. No new matter is raised by this response. This response could not have been previously presented because the outstanding §102(b) and §103(a) rejections are based, at least in part, on new reasoning. Also, this amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Lastly, it is requested that the response be entered even if the application is not allowed because this response will place the application in better form for appeal by materially simplifying the issues.

If the application is not in proper form for allowance, Applicants request that the Examiner telephone the Applicants' undersigned representative to discuss any further outstanding issues.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1, 3 and 8-20 because of an informality in claim 1. As noted above, claim 1 was amended to correct an antecedent basis issue, specifically changing the limitation "the recorded area" to "a recorded area". Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding objections to the pending claims.

Prior Art Rejections

A. Claims 22, 24 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,422,609 (Yanagawa) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,559,770 (Hiroki).

B. Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yanagawa in view of Hiroki, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,704,263 (Nijboer et al.).

C. Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,890,273 (Takeuchi et al.) in view of Hiroki.

As stated above, claims 22-25 and 29 have been cancelled. Therefore, the rejections of these claims have been rendered effectively moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for stating that claims 1, 3 and 8-20 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objection. With the cancellation of claims 2, 4-7 and 21-29 and the amendment of claim 1, all pending claims in the application are considered to be allowable.

Conclusion

Insofar as the Examiner's objections and rejections were fully addressed, the instant application is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the Final Rejection, formal entry of the present "Amendment After Final," and issuance of a Notice of Allowability of all pending claims is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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(Date)

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